

Order of the Mare



By Fredrik Edman

From the woodlands of eastern Bretonnia, and throughout the villages and towns within a day's ride of the Forest of Loren, rumours spread of the Mare Witch. A crone steeped in dark sorcery to some, she is revered by a growing following as the Prophetess of the Mare. Claiming descent from ancient heroes of the days of Gilles le Breton, she has taken upon herself the restoration of knights cast down in disgrace. Eager to reclaim their honour, these warriors swear themselves to her as once they did to their lords, or even the Lady of the Lake. The greatest among them are named Paragons, given new purpose by the Prophetess and sent away to foreign lands in search of wyrdstone. Alongside these knights travel a strange company of warriors known as the Dames of the Mare.

The Prophetess appoints these Dames to her retinues, each possessing peculiar gifts that many would readily condemn as witchcraft. Yet the Paragons, seemingly enthralled by the Mare Witch, pay little heed to the unnatural powers of their companions. Though Bretonnian knights have long regarded such sorcery with suspicion, they speak only of the courage and nobility of the Dames, and will tolerate no accusation against them.

The Dames are known to favour promising squires, granting them uncommon strength and courage and naming them Gallants. These young warriors are raised prematurely as Knights Errant and form close bonds with the Paragons they accompany upon long journeys into the unknown. Stranger, however, is the custom that follows. In place of the squires thus elevated, the Dames take young girls into their service, instructing them in the hidden traditions of their mysterious order.

Special rules

Knight's virtue: A knight is a chivalrous warrior who is superior to ordinary warriors. He will never panic and break from combat and so does not have to pass a Leadership test for being all alone.

Choice of warriors

An Order of the Mare warband must include a minimum of three models. You have 500 gc which you can use to recruit your initial warband. The maximum number of warriors in your warband may never exceed 15.

Paragon: Each Order of the Mare warband must have one Paragon. No more, no less!

Dame of the Mare: Your warband must include a single Dame of the Mare. If she is removed you must recruit a new one without delay (no other warriors may be recruited before you do).

Gallant: Your warband may include a single Gallant.

Esquires: Your warband may include up to two Esquires.

Pilgrims: Your warband may include any number of Pilgrims.

Bowmen: Your warband may include up to seven Bowmen.

Redeemed knights: Your warband may include up to five Redeemed knights.

Companion filly: Your warband may include a single Companion filly.

Hired swords: Order of the Mare warbands have access to the same hired swords as a mercenary warband would.

Starting experience

The **Paragon** starts with 20 experience.

The **Dame of the Mare** starts with 8 experience.

The **Gallant** starts with 8 experience.

Esquires start with 0 experience.

Henchmen start with 0 experience.



Order of the Mare equipment list

FOOTMAN EQUIPMENT LIST

Combat weapons

Dagger	1st free/2 gc
Mace	3 gc
Axe	5 gc
Sword	10 gc
Spear	10 gc
Halberd	10 gc
Double-handed weapon	15 gc
Flail	15 gc
Morning star	15 gc
Lance*	(Knights only) 20 gc

Missile weapons

Bow	(Pilgrims only) 10 gc
-----	-----------------------

Armour

Shield	5 gc
Helmet	10 gc
Light armour	20 gc
Heavy armour	50 gc

Miscellaneous

Barding*	(Knights only) 20 gc
Horse*	(Knights only) 20 gc
Warhorse*	(Knights only) 40 gc

**These special prices represent Bretonnian knights commonly having access to gear for fighting on horseback. When attempting to purchase these items after initial warband creation, they pay the same prices as other warbands and must roll to find them as normal. No roll is necessary to find these items when first starting your warband.*

ARCHER EQUIPMENT LIST

Combat weapons

Dagger	1st free/2 gc
Mace	3 gc
Axe	5 gc
Sword	10 gc
Spear	(Esquires only) 10 gc

Missile weapons

Bow	10 gc
Longbow	15 gc

Armour

Shield	5 gc
Buckler	5 gc
Helmet	10 gc
Light armour	20 gc

Miscellaneous

Horse	(Esquires only) 40 gc
-------	-----------------------

DAME EQUIPMENT LIST

Combat weapons

Dagger	1st free/2 gc
Mace	3 gc
Axe	5 gc
Sword	10 gc
Morning star	15 gc

Miscellaneous

Horse	40 gc
Warhorse	80 gc



Order of the Mare skills table

	Combat	Shooting	Academic	Strength	Speed
Paragon	✓			✓	✓
Dame of the Mare	✓		✓	✓	✓
Gallant	✓			✓	✓
Esquiresse	✓		✓		✓

Heroes

1 Paragon

65 gold crowns to hire

Once a Questing Knight who forsook his lands and possessions to seek the Lady of the Lake's Grail, setting forth to confront deadly adversaries and prove his worth. During his noble quest, however, the knight fell into disgrace and failed in his sacred cause. In his darkest hours, consumed by shame and self-loathing, he encountered the Prophetess of the Mare, who recognised in him a gallant above all others. She named him her champion, a Paragon of chivalry who would henceforth take up arms in her cause and, in doing so, find his true path.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
4	4	3	4	3	1	4	1	8

Weapons/Armour: The Paragon may be equipped from the Footman equipment list.

SPECIAL RULES:

Leader: Any warrior within 6" of the Paragon may use his Leadership value when taking Leadership tests.

Knight's virtue: The Paragon follows the rules of *Knight's virtue*.



1 Dame of the Mare

55 gold crowns to hire

Shrouded in mystery, yet noble and stalwart, a Dame of the Mare is an inspiring sight. Her armour recalls the ancient days of Gilles le Breton, though where she came by such relics none can say. Subtle arcane energies dance about her fingertips, betraying powers seldom spoken of in Bretonnia. Yet few who stand in her presence think to question them, for such is the Dame's bearing that knights and commoners alike cannot help but regard her with awe.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
4	3	3	3	3	1	3	1	8

Weapons/Armour: The Dame of the Mare comes equipped with ancient armour that may never be removed, traded or stolen. The armour does not prevent her from casting spells and provides a 5+ save that cannot be modified, but offers no protection against magical attacks. She may otherwise be equipped from the Dame equipment list.

SPECIAL RULES:

Prayers: The Dame of the Mare may use prayers from the Blessings of the Mare list. She starts with one randomly determined prayer.

0-1 Gallant

35 gold crowns to hire

A young knight errant, brimming with boldness and youthfulness, emerged from humble origins as the former squire of the Paragon. Clad in the outdated armour of his generous benefactor, he seeks to prove worthiness in honour of the Dame of the Mare, the mystical maid that elevated him to knighthood and blessed him with unbelievable strength and courage.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
4	3	3	4	3	1	3	1	7

Weapons/Armour: The Gallant may be equipped from the Footman equipment list.

SPECIAL RULES:

Knight's virtue: The Gallant follows the rules of *Knight's virtue*.



0-2 EsQUIRESSES

15 gold crowns to hire

Young girls aspiring to damehood. They serve their knights while learning the arts of combat, chivalry and war. At the same time, each is instructed in mysticism by the Dame who first recruited her. Eager to prove themselves worthy, these young squires hope that one day they too will take their place among the Dames of the Mare.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
4	2	2	3	3	1	3	1	6

Weapons/Armour: EsQUIRESSES may be equipped from the Archer equipment list.

Henchmen

Pilgrims

20 gold crowns to hire

Devout peasants that forsake their old lives to follow the Paragon and the mysterious Dame of the Mare on her journeys across the lands.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
4	2	2	3	3	1	3	1	6

Weapons/Armour: Pilgrims may be equipped from the Footman equipment list.

SPECIAL RULES:

Hatred: Pilgrims are so devout to the Dame of the Mare that they hate all and any enemies that defy her.

Peasants: While devout and loyal, pilgrims are simple peasants with no ambition other than following their chosen saint, as such may never become heroes. Reroll any *The Lad's Got Talent* results.

O-7 Bowmen

20 gold crowns to hire

Seasoned archers who serve in their lords' ranks, providing support with their bows and arrows. Such weapons are especially useful on long journeys through foreign lands, and archers are often brought along for this reason. Bound by duty to the knights they serve, they follow the retinue to whatever end.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
4	3	3	3	3	1	3	1	6

Weapons/Armour: Bowmen may be equipped from the Archer equipment list.

O-5 Redeemed knights

35 gold crowns to hire

Formerly disgraced knights who have found new purpose in the service of the Prophetess of the Mare. Sworn to her cause, they hide the colours and symbols of their former lords beneath plain hoods, both as a mark of devotion and to leave their old lives behind.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
4	4	3	3	3	1	3	1	7

Weapons/Armour: Redeemed knights may be equipped from the Footman equipment list.

SPECIAL RULES:

Knight's virtue: Redeemed knights follow the rules of *Knight's virtue*.



O-1 Companion filly

45 gold crowns to hire

A devout beast that follows wherever the Dame of the Mare treads. The animal is noble and pure, yet there is something otherworldly about it. Stranger still, the horse appears to be of a breed that none in the warband have seen before. Some remark upon its likeness to steeds depicted in old paintings and histories: noble and untamed, as strong as any trained warhorse, yet twice as fierce. Could this be a remnant of the ancient breed ridden by Bretonnian knights in the days of Gilles le Breton, from which the great steeds of Bretonnia are descended?

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
8	4	0	3	3	1	4	2	5

Weapons/Armour: The Filly fights with its hooves and suffers no penalty for fighting unarmed. It is clad in an odd-looking covering, as though from bygone times, yet it shimmers with a spectral gleam. The covering provides the beast with a 5+ save that cannot be modified, but offers no protection against magical attacks. The Filly may never take any equipment, except for the covering it already carries.

SPECIAL RULES:

Horse: The filly is an animal and thus does not gain any experience. Additionally it follows the movement rules for mounted warriors.



Blessings of the Mare

1. Unnerving gaze

Difficulty: 7

The Dame of the Mare, with her daunting gaze, petrifies her adversaries and renders them hesitant to act against her. All attacks targeting the Dame in hand-to-hand combat are at -1 to hit. Furthermore, all enemy models that are in base contact with the Dame must strike last, no matter their target. The effects of the spell lasts until the beginning of the Order of the Mare player's next Shooting phase.

2. Phantom hoof

Difficulty: 9

The Dame channels a spectral force to deliver a distant and impactful strike, akin to a horse's kick. Target any enemy warrior within 6" of the Dame, that model suffers a Strength 5 hit with the *concussion* special rule.

3. Dame's inspiration

Difficulty: 7

Infused with equine fervour, the Dame enhances her striking power and agility, allowing a relentless onslaught in the heat of battle. The Dame's attacks in combat gain +1 to hit, +1 to their Strength and Injury rolls from her attacks are at +1. The Dame must test, by rolling the prayer's difficulty or greater on 2D6, at the start of each of her turns to see if the effect remains in play.

4. Thirst for valour

Difficulty: 8

The Dame ignites one of her allies (it can't be herself) within 12" with inspiration and an insatiable thirst for glory and honour in the name of the Prophetess of the Mare. The target warrior is now frenzied. Only one warrior can be affected by this spell at a time, if the Dame chooses a new warrior the former target loses their frenzy.

5. Aura of dauntlessness

Difficulty: 10

The Dame says a prayer to bestow unwavering courage upon her entire retinue, empowering them to face adversity with resolute bravery and unyielding determination on the battlefield. For the duration of the battle, the save provided by Dame's and friendly Companion fillies' special armour save is increased by 1. The rest of the warband gains a special unmodifiable 6+ save against all non-magical attacks, this save is in addition to (and taken after) any other saves they may have.

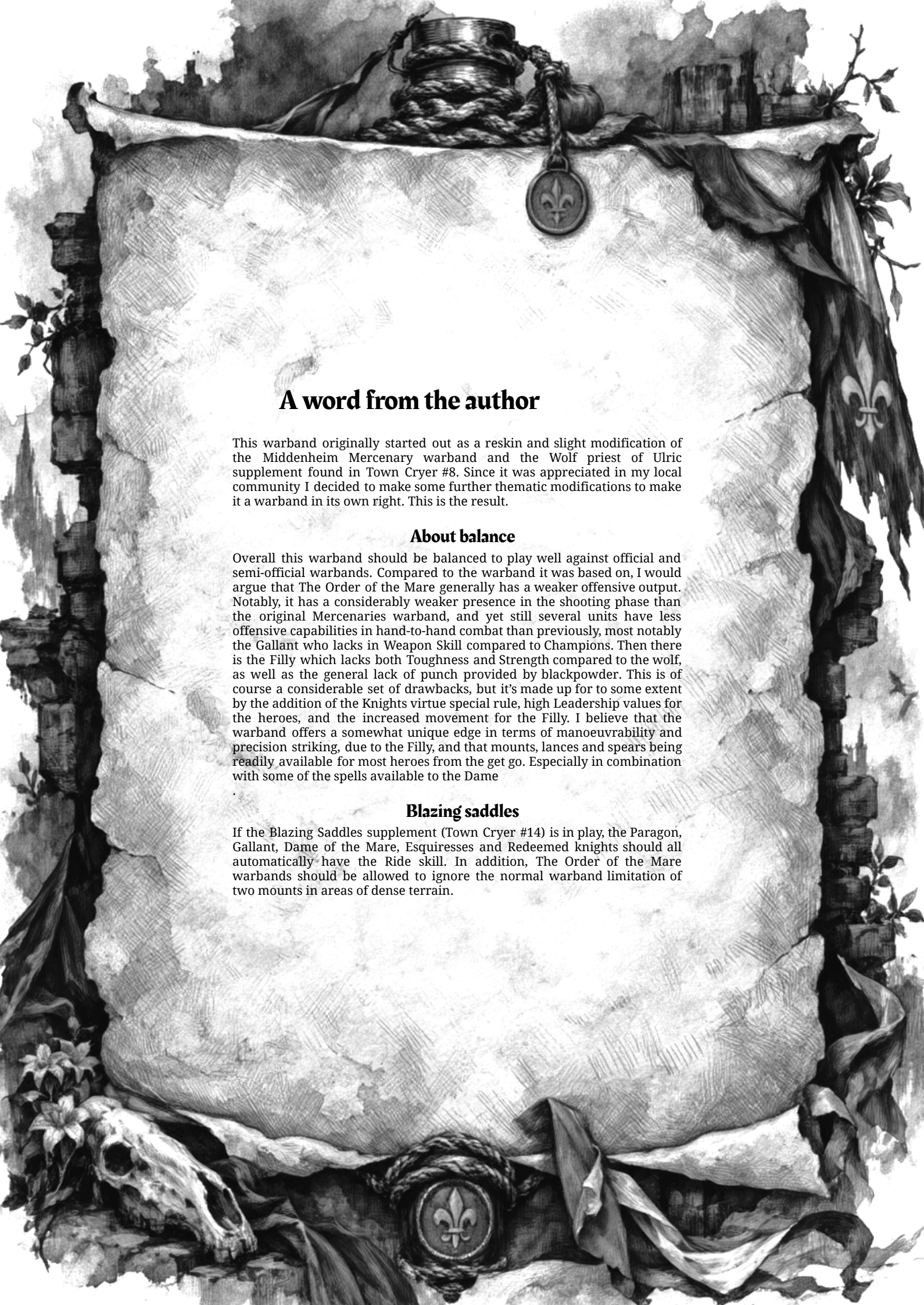
6. The Dame's charger

Difficulty: 8

Eerie lights engulf the Dame who suddenly sits upon a spectral steed from ancient history: this counts as her becoming mounted on a warhorse with a modified statline. It will remain in play until the end of the game or until the Dame is dismounted. The Spectral charger offers no armour save like other mounts, but increases the special save from the Dame's own armour by 1. In addition, the Spectral charger is such a ghastly apparition that it and its rider cause *fear*.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Spectral charger	8	4	0	4	4	1	4	2	7





A word from the author

This warband originally started out as a reskin and slight modification of the Middenheim Mercenary warband and the Wolf priest of Ulric supplement found in Town Cryer #8. Since it was appreciated in my local community I decided to make some further thematic modifications to make it a warband in its own right. This is the result.

About balance

Overall this warband should be balanced to play well against official and semi-official warbands. Compared to the warband it was based on, I would argue that The Order of the Mare generally has a weaker offensive output. Notably, it has a considerably weaker presence in the shooting phase than the original Mercenaries warband, and yet still several units have less offensive capabilities in hand-to-hand combat than previously, most notably the Gallant who lacks in Weapon Skill compared to Champions. Then there is the Filly which lacks both Toughness and Strength compared to the wolf, as well as the general lack of punch provided by blackpowder. This is of course a considerable set of drawbacks, but it's made up for to some extent by the addition of the Knights virtue special rule, high Leadership values for the heroes, and the increased movement for the Filly. I believe that the warband offers a somewhat unique edge in terms of manoeuvrability and precision striking, due to the Filly, and that mounts, lances and spears being readily available for most heroes from the get go. Especially in combination with some of the spells available to the Dame

Blazing saddles

If the Blazing Saddles supplement (Town Cryer #14) is in play, the Paragon, Gallant, Dame of the Mare, EsQUIRES and Redeemed knights should all automatically have the Ride skill. In addition, The Order of the Mare warbands should be allowed to ignore the normal warband limitation of two mounts in areas of dense terrain.

